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**REGISTER
OF THE
REVELLA E. HUGHES PAPERS**

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1990

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REVELLA E. HUGHES PAPERS. 1895-1984

Accession Number: 493
Processed by: Cora P. Teel and Merry J. Brown
Date completed: November 1990
Location: Special Collections Department

This collection was a gift of the Revella E. Hughes estate. This addendum to the collection was received in February, 1989.

Linear feet of self space: 6 ft.

Literary rights: not assigned to Marshall University

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Explanatory notes:

Bx refers to "box" in which papers are filed.

Fd refers to "folder"

CONTENT AND SCOPE OF THE COLLECTION

This addendum to the Revella E. Hughes papers consists of correspondence, professional papers, photographs, holograph music manuscripts, notebooks, plaques, certificates, photographs, and audio cassette tapes. Also included are programs and announcements of concerts, recitals, and other musical events in which Miss Hughes participated. The newspaper clippings and programs encompass the range of Miss Hughes' performing career, from 1909, at Hartshorn and Memorial College in Richmond, Virginia, until her final appearances in West Virginia in 1985 and 1986.

Printed and manuscript musical arrangements comprise the bulk of the collection.

Correspondence, primarily from 1970 until 1986, includes letters from the Marble Collegiate Church in New York City; her alma mater, Howard University; and Marshall University, Huntington, West Virginia, which awarded her the honorary doctorate of music, in 1985.

Certificates include diplomas and citations for various civic and community activities.

Photographs span almost her lifetime, ranging from her early years, to the awarding of her honorary doctorate at the age of ninety years.

REVELLA EUDOSIA HUGHES, 1895-1987

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A musician and performer whose repertoire ranged from classical to jazz, Revella Hughes began developing her talent under the tutelage of her mother in Huntington, West Virginia. Born July 27, 1895, to George and Anna B. Page Hughes, Miss Hughes began piano lessons at age five. Although she began school in Huntington, she transferred to her mother's alma mater, Hartshorn Memorial College in Richmond, Virginia, and received her diploma for completion of the course in music in 1909. She then attended Oberlin High School in Oberlin, Ohio, graduating in 1915. While at Oberlin, Miss Hughes took courses in the Conservatory and began choral work that was to prove the foundation of her later career. She sang with the high school girls' choir, the Oberlin Musical Union and the First Methodist Church choir. She also played a violin in the high school orchestra and composed a rally song for the high school.

From Oberlin, Miss Hughes went to Howard University in Washington, D. C., where she studied voice and piano. Upon receipt of her bachelor of music degree in 1917, she remained in Washington to teach at the Washington Conservatory of Music for one year. She then became director of music at Orangeburg State College in South Carolina, while continuing to perform in a series of concerts and recitals.

By 1920, Miss Hughes was in New York City, studying voice under George Bagby. During this period she developed her repertoire and appeared with such artists as Paul Robeson, Roland Hayes and Marian Anderson. A highlight of this early period was Miss Hughes' appearance as principal soloist at the Mayor Hylan People's Concerts in September 1921 in Central Park. She was the first person of her race to be so featured. While a student of Walter Kiesewetter, voice coach for Metropolitan and Chicago Opera singers, Miss Hughes also performed for the New York City Police Department Police Band banquet at the Hotel Astor in May 1922. She also recorded on W. C. Handy's Black Swan record label.

In 1923, Miss Hughes' career took a radical departure when she was offered a contract to become the choral director for the Broadway production of "Shuffle Along," featuring the music of Eubie Blake and Noble Sissle. She went on tour with the road company to major cities, including Chicago and Saint Louis. This change in career effected a change in her personal life as well, ending the marriage she had contracted in 1920 with Layton Wheaton, a New York dentist she had met when both were students at Howard. From the road company of "Shuffle Along," Miss Hughes accepted the lead in "Runnin' Wild," and toured with that show through 1925. In addition to the theatre, she also performed on the radio, beginning in 1923 on WHN, New York, and appeared at motion picture houses as part of the live entertainment. Notable among these presentation house appearances were her performances on the B. F. Keith circuit in

her home town of Huntington, and at Chicago's Regal Theatre. By 1930, after appearing in "Hot Rhythm" at New York's Colonial Theatre, she had formed the Four Bon-Bons, a quartet composed of Georgette Harvey of "Runnin' Wild" and "Porgy," Musa Williams and Lois Parker. The Bon1Bons had the distinction of appearing on national Columbia Broadcasting System broadcasts where their race was not mentioned. They were also singled out to participate in an experimental television broadcast.

The Depression ended the golden years of the Harlem Renaissance that had injected black music and literature into the mainstream of American culture. This period also brought about another major shift in Miss Hughes' career. In 1932, she returned to Huntington to take care of her widowed mother in her last illness. Over the objections of some townspeople who decried her show1business associations, she secured the position of supervisor of public school music in the then1segregated schools. She created the band at Douglass High School, and took her young musicians out into the community where they performed at major civic events and for white civic groups. After placing first in the West Virginia High School Music Contest (Negro) for three consecutive years, her high school musicians won a permanent trophy. In less than ten years, Miss Hughes had transformed a non-existent music program into one that won state-wide recognition. She also found time to complete a master's degree in music at Northwestern University.

At the death of her mother, Miss Hughes returned to New York to develop yet another phase of her career. Declaring that she had "left her voice with her students back in Huntington," she perfected and toured with "An Informal Hour of Music" on the Hammond organ, a program that summarized her musical career. Beginning with several classical pieces, she then gave a jazz treatment to light classical numbers, added some Latin-American rhythms, and ended with compositions by Duke Ellington, Fats Waller and W. C. Handy. Playing primarily in supper clubs on the East Coast, she made several appearances in West Virginia. A highlight of this period was in 1953 when she toured Europe and the Middle East with the Gypsy Markoff show for the U. S. O. She served as musical arranger for the group in addition to performing on the organ.

Miss Hughes retired from full-time performing in 1955. After a twenty-five year hiatus, she was "rediscovered" and brought out of retirement by the Universal Jazz Coalition for the Women's Jazz Festival in New York in 1980. She then began a new round of appearances: she appeared at the Marble Collegiate Church, Saint Peter's Church Jazz Festival, Radio City Music Hall and the American Museum of Natural History, all in New York. She also performed for the Baldwin-Hammond Company in New Jersey and for the benefit of scholarships at the Palm Beach Junior College in Florida. In 1984 she gave concerts in Los Angeles, California, and at the West Virginia Black Culture Festival in Charleston, West Virginia. Miss Hughes also continued to garner honors. She was named distinguished alumna by Howard University in 1984 and received an honorary doctorate of music from Marshall University, in Huntington, West Virginia, in 1985.

She continued to visit West Virginia, participating in the 1986 Douglass High School reunion in Huntington. She died in New York City on October 24, 1987, at the age of ninety-two years. In 1988, she was inducted posthumously into the Huntington, West Virginia, Wall of Fame as an outstanding native of the city.

I. Personal Papers

Bx 1 Correspondence 9 Fd

Fd 1	Hughes letters unsent	4 items
Fd 2	Letters, Notes & Cards Received, undated	5 items
Fd 3	Letters Received; 1914-1969	24 items
Fd 4	Letters Received; 1970-1985	22 items
Fd 5	Letters from Howard University, 1982-1986	18 items
Fd 6	Letters from Marble Collegiate Church, 1976-1983	24 items
Fd 7	Letters from Marshall University, 1970-1986	27 items
Fd 8	Miscellaneous Personal	30 items
Fd 9	Addresses, Lists and Labels	6 items

Bx 2 Personal Papers 7 Fd

Fd 1	Certificates and Education Records	21 items
Fd 2	Certificates and Awards of Esteem	17 items
Fd 3	Housing Colop; Bank; Medical Papers	12 items
Fd 4	Music Education Workshop	1 item
	"Assignment #1" by Revella Hughes	
Fd 5	Music Education Workshop	1 item
	"Readings" by Revella Hughes	
Fd 6	Music Education Workshop	1 item
	"Negro Music" by Revella Hughes	
Fd 7	Music Education Workshop	8 items

Miscellaneous Papers by Revella Hughes

Bx 3	Performances	5 Fd
Fd 1	Programs from Performances, etc., early to 1980	33 items
Fd 2	Programs from Performances, etc., 1980 to 1983	28 items
Fd 3	Programs from Performances, etc., 1984)	11 items
Fd 4	Programs from Performances, etc., 1985-1987	8 items
Fd 5	Organ Setup & Techniques	3 items
Bx 4	Newspaper, Publicity and Misc. Papers	9 Fd
Fd 1	Articles about Revella Hughes; Manuscripts	4 items
Fd 2	Photocopies of news clippings, etc., early to c. 1965	22 items
Fd 3	Photocopies of news clippings, etc., c. 1980--	15 items
Fd 4	Photocopies of articles on her inheritance	4 items
Fd 5	Newspaper Clipping,; 1927-1983	24 items
Fd 6	Newspaper Clippings; 1984	24 items
Fd 7	Miscellaneous Black History	22 items
Fd 8	Misc. Printed Pamphlets, etc.	16 items
Fd 9	Letter and Composition of Hunter Heath, April 1974	3 items
Bx 5	Photographs	10 Fds
Fd 1	Photographs and snapshots; 'teens	16 items
Fd 2	Photographs; 1920's	12 items
Fd 3	Photographs; 1930's	17 items
Fd 4	Photographs and negative; 1940's	18 items

Fd 5 Photographs; 1950's and 1960's	22 items
Fd 6 Photographs; 1980's	5 items
Fd 7 Oversized Photographs	2 items
Fd 8 Color Snapshots; 1980's	19 items
Fd 9 Evelyn Adams Pictures and negatives	9 items
Fd 10 Not Revella (Including Eubie Blake and Duke Ellington) Photographs, signed	16 items

II. Professional Papers

Bx 6	Music Manuscripts	16 Fd
Fd 1 Music Manuscripts - A		22 items
Fd 2 Music Manuscripts - B		11 items
Fd 3 Music Manuscripts - C		21 items
Fd 4 Music Manuscripts - D		22 items
Fd 5 Music Manuscripts - E-F		18 items
Fd 6 Music Manuscripts - G-H		21 items
Fd 7 Music Manuscripts - I-ILL		22 items
Fd 8 Music Manuscripts - ILM-IZ		26 items
Fd 9 Music Manuscripts - J		21 items
Fd 10 Music Manuscripts - K-L		26 items
Fd 11 Music Manuscripts - M		25 items
Fd 12 Music Manuscripts - N-Q		24 items
Fd 13 Music Manuscripts - R		15 items
Fd 14 Music Manuscripts - S-Somet		23 items

Fd 15 Music Manuscripts - Somew-Steal 17 items

Fd 16 Music Manuscripts - St L-SZ 15 items

Bx 7 Music Manuscripts; Printed Music 17 Fd

Fd 1 Music Manuscripts - T 29 items

Fd 2 Music Manuscripts - U-Z 32 items

Fd 3 Music Manuscripts - [Two Titles] 27 items

Fd 4 Music Manuscripts - Notebook' 1 item

Fd 5 Music Manuscripts - Notebook 1 item

Fd 6 Music Manuscripts - Untitled 60 items

Fd 7 Music Manuscripts - Untitled 36 items

Fd 8 Autographed Music: Bernardo Alemany 1 item

Fd 9 Autographed Music: Eubie Blake 2 items

Fd 10 Printed Music - Titles A-B 15 items

Fd 11 Printed Music - C-F 22 items

Fd 12 Printed Music - G-I 32 items

Fd 13 Printed Music - J-N 25 items

Fd 14 Printed Music - O-S 18 items

Fd 15 Printed Music - T-Z 18 items

Fd 16 Printed Music - Multiple Titles 19 items

Fd 17 Printed Music - Untitled 9 items

Bx 8 Printed Collections of Music; Other Material 17 Fd

Fd 1 *All Time Favorite Hymns* 1 item

Fd 2 <i>The Deluxe Herb Alpert and the Tijuana Brass Souvenir Song Album</i>	1 item
Fd 3 [Duke Ellington]	1 item
Fd 4 <i>Everybody's Favorite Piano Books</i>	1 item
Fd 5 <i>Fifty-six Songs You Like to Sing</i>	1 item
Fd 6 <i>Great Songs of the Gospel</i>	3 items
Fd 7 <i>High Hosannas</i>	1 item
Fd 8 <i>Hymns of Praise</i>	1 item
Fd 9 <i>The Latin American Beat</i>	1 item
Fd 10 <i>Make a Joyful Noise Unto the Lord All Ye Lands</i>	1 item
Fd 11 <i>A Party with Betty Comden and Adolph Green: Solo Folio</i>	1 item
Fd 12 <i>Show Tunes You Like to Remember For the Hammond Organ</i>	1 item
Fd 13 <i>16 Solo Spirituals</i>	1 item
Fd 14 <i>Ten Choice Negro Folk Songs for Voice and Piano</i>	1 item
Fd 15 <i>Ten Negro Spirituals</i>	1 item
Fd 16 <i>Hammond Organ Owner's Guide</i>	3 items
Fd 17 Separation Sheet	1 item

Bx 9 Notebooks	11 Fds
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These are items found in three-ring binders.

Fd 1 "Bequests"	1 item
Fd 2 NBk 1: Coming Out of Retirement, 1980	62 items
Fd 3 NBk 1: "Organ. Clubs and Early Concerts, 1944	43 items
Fd 4 NBk 1: Loose material	3 items

Fd 5 NBk 2: "Bon Bons, 1928?"	1 item
Fd 6 NBk 2: "Douglass High, Barnette Grade, West End, 1932-1943"	94 items
Fd 7 NBk 2: Loose material	13 items
Fd 8 NBk 3: "Education"	29 items
Fd 9 NBk 3: "Northwestern," "Personal Appearances"	62 items
Fd 10 NBk 3: "How I Slipped into the Entertainment World"	
Fd 11 NBk 4: Marshall University, 1985-1986	69 items

Bx 10	Plaques, Awards	12 items
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Item 1: Arthur Bramwell Mapp Scholarship Fund, 1982

Item 2: Bill and Effie Gear, 1980

Item 3: City of Huntington, undated

Item 4: Douglass Reunion Committee, 1985

Item 5: GCHS Chorus, 1975

Item 6: Howard University, 1987

Item 7: Howard University Alumni, 1984

Item 8: Huntington Professional and Business Men's Club, 1985

Item 9: Marshall University College of Fine Arts, 1985

Item 10: National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 1971

Item 11: [Painting] in decorative mosaic-work frame, undated

Item 12: [Painting] in decorative mosaic-work frame, undated. Companion to item

11.

Bx 11 Oversized items	1 fd; 5 items
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Fd 1 Oversized holographic sheet music

Artifact 1: Doctoral hood, Doctor of Music, Marshall University, 1985

Artifact 2: Walnut battery-powered clock, Douglass Reunion Committee, 1986
(see separation sheet)

Item 1: Citation, State of New York, 1985

Item 2: Citation, State of New York, 1985; framed

Item 3: Souvenir Program, Marble Collegiate Church, 1981; framed

Bx 12 Audio Recordings of Revella Hughes

3 items

Item 1 - Labeled "Revella's Hughes". A black Maxell tape cassette. Side A, contains about 5 minutes of organ music. Side B, is blank.

Item 2 - Labeled "St. Bartholomew's Church", "Revella Hughes other side", "10/31/82". A white tape cassette. Side A, contains about 45 minutes of organ music. Side B, is identified on the tape as "Revella Hughes on the organ". It has about 20 minutes of organ music.

Item 3 - Labeled "Tape #2 Set #2, Revella Hughes (2), 10/20/84, Black Cultural Festival, The Cultural Center". A smoke color cassette tape. Side A contains 3 minutes of organ music. The remainder of the side is blank. Side B is blank.

OVERSIZED ITEMS; located in Special Collections Department

Item 1: "Revella," [drawing] pen and ink; framed. 8 x 26 ½ inches

Item 2: [Diplomas] (Hartshorn, Oberlin, Howard, Northwestern), 1911-1943; in one frame. 43 x 14 inches

Item 3: Diploma, Marshall University, 1985; framed. 20 x 24 inches